

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 DHA-02 IO-13 /081 W

-----260523Z 121415 /21

P R 260421Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7634

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MANILA 4474

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RP, LY, XF

SUBJECT: MARCOS ANNOUNCES MINDANAO "FORMULA"

1. SUMMARY. GOP HAS RELEASED TEXT OF SKETCHY "FORMULA" BASED ON EXCHANGE OF CABLES BETWEEN MARCOS AND QADHAFI WHICH ALLEGEDLY CONSTITUTES "AGREEMENT" TO END MINDANAO CONFLICT. IT MAKES FOLLOWING POINTS: (A) AUTONOMOUS REGION OF 13 PROVINCES WILL BE PROCLAIMED BY DECREE; (B) PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL BE FORMED, APPARENTLY BY DECREE; (C) PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL HOLD "REFERENDUM" REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION. ALTHOUGH TIMING IS NOT SPECIFIED WE ASSUME THAT CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE WILL BE IN ORDER STATED, I.E. THAT MARCOS HAS GIVEN IN TO MNLF DEMANDS TO DECREE REGION WITHOUT PRIOR PLEBISCITE. TATAD HAS CONFIRMED THAT APRIL 17 PLEBISCITE WILL BE HELD AS SCHEDULED AND THIS WE ASSUME WILL TURN OUT
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(AFTER SUITABLE REVISION OF QUESTIONS) TO BE SAME AS REFERENDUM REFERRED TO IN "FORMULA". KEY QUESTIONS REGARDING NATURE OF "AUTONOMY" ARE NOT ADDRESSED BY "FORMULA", HENCE THERE IS AMPLE ROOM FOR FURTHER MNLF-GOP DISAGREEMENT. HOWEVER ASSUMING HE CAN HANDLE NEGATIVE DOMESTIC REACTION BY FURTHER OBFUSCATION MARCOS MAY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BUYING TIME BY FORESTALLING RESUMPTION

CONFLICT UNTIL AFTER ISLAMIC CONFERENCE IN MAY OR JUNE.
END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING MEETING OF NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
MARCH 25 PRESIDENT MARCOS ANNOUNCED TO END MINDANAO CON-
FLICT "FORMULA" PROPOSED BY QADHAFI AND ACCEPTED BY GOP.
ANNOUNCEMENT NOT REPEAT NOT TELEVISED BUT ALL MARCH 26
PAPERS CARRY ESSENTIALLY SAME ACCOUNT. PRESS NOTES
THAT FORMULA WAS PROPOSED AND ACCEPTED IN QADHAFI-MARCOS
EXCHANGE OF CABLES MARCH 18-19. NOTE VERBALE FROM
LIBYAN FOREIGN MINISTRY TO PHILIPPINE EMBASSY ON MARCH 22
CONFIRMED THAT EXCHANGE OF CABLES "CONSTITUTED AN AGREE-
MENT BETWEEN THE TWO HEADS OF STATE THAT ANY STEP TOWARDS
AUTONOMY IN THE SOUTHWESTERN (SIC) PHILIPPINES SHOULD
BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TWO AGREEMENTS" (I.E. THOSE OF
DECEMBER 23 AND MARCH 18-19).

3. ACCORDING OFFICIAL PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY (PNA)
FULL TEXT OF "FORMULA" (TAKEN FROM QADHAFI CABLE) IS AS
FOLLOWS: BEGIN QUOTE:

I REFER TO THE TALKS OF TODAY'S EVENING BETWEEN
THE FIRST LADY AND MYSELF AND IT HAS BEEN AGREEMENT WITH
HER THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT SIGNED
ON DECEMBER 23, 1976 AND IN IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS PROVISIONS,
THE FOLLOWING STEPS BE TAKEN.

--A DECISION TO BE ISSUED BY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
DECLARING AUTONOMY IN THE 13 AREAS DEFINED BY THE TRIPOLI
AGREEMENT.

-- A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE AUTONOMY TO BE
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FORMED BY A DECISION ISSUED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPOUBLIC IN WHICH THE CONCERNED PARTIES FROM THE MORO
NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT AND THE INHABITANTS OF THE AREAS
OF THE AUTONOMY TAKE PART.

-- THIS PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL HOLD A
REFERENDUM IN THE AREAS OF AUTONOMY (IN THE 13 PROVINCES
MENTIONED IN THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT) CONCERNING THE
ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN THE AREAS OF THE
AUTONOMY IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE XI (E) OF THE FILIPINO
CONSTITUTION AND THIS MEANS THAT PEOPLE BE ASKED HOW TO
ORGANIZE THEMSELVES ADMINISTRATIVELY WITHIN THE AREAS
OF THE AUTONOMY.

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AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MANILA 4474

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

-- THIS SOLUTION SHALL PUT AN END TO THIS
QUESTION AND AN END TO THE WAR AND LEAVES NO CHANCE
TO THOSE WHO ARE OPPOSING THE REACHING OF A SOLUTION
AND IT WILL OPEN ON THE OTHER HAND, A NEW PAGE IN THE
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE ISLAMIC
STARES. END QUOTE.

4. ACCORDING PRESS, QADHAFI HAS CONFIRMED TO PRESIDENT
MARCOS THAT ISLAMIC CONFERENCE "COMMITTEE OF FOUR"
HAS ENDORSED SETTLEMENT. HE REPORTEDLY SAID HE WOULD
CONTACT MNLF "T CONVINCE THEM TO AGREE TO THE "FORMULA"
BUT MNLF AGREEMENT NOT REPEAT NOT YET CONFIRMED.

5. INFORMATION SECRETARY TATAD MADE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL
POINTS, AS REPORTED BY ALL PAPERS:

A. PLEBISCITE OF APRIL 17 WILL BE HELD AS
SCHEDULED.

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B. PRESIDENT MARCOS WILL HOLD NATIONALLY
TELEVISED PRESS CONFERENCE AND TAKE "PHONE IN" QUESTIONS
ON SETTLEMENT ON TUESDAY, MARCH 29 AT 4 P.M.

6. ON LIGHTER SIDE, MANILA PUBLIC TREATED TO MARCH 26
TELECAST OF IMELDA'S LATEST WANDERINGS IN LIBYA (VIA

SATELLITE FROM LONDON, NARRATED BY AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT J.V. CRUZ) WHICH SHOWED HER CALLING ON QADHAFT'S AGING FATHER IN HIS TENT, ENTERTAINING LIBYANS WITH PHILIPPINE FOLK DANCES, ETC., BUT REVEALED NOTHING SIGNIFICANT ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS.

7. COMMENT: ANNOUNCEMENT OF FORMULA IS AMBIGUOUS, NO DOUBT DELIBERATELY SO. AS SUGGESTED BY EARLIER VALENCIA COMMENTARY WE ASSUME THAT (A) DECREE PROCLAIMING THIRTEEN PROVINCES WILL BE FIRST STEP, AND (B) "REFERENDUM" REFERRED TO IN THIRD PARAGRAPH OF FORMULA WILL BE THE APRIL 17 PLEBISCITE WITH NEW SET OF QUESTIONS. IF THESE ASSUMPTIONS CORRECT, AND THEY APPEAR SAFE ENOUGH, MARCOS HAS GIVEN IN TO MNLF-LIBYAN DEMANDS THAT "AUTONOMOUS REGION" BE PROCLAIMED BY DECREE, WITHOUT PRIOR PLEBISCITE. AGREEMENT DOES NOT GO BEYOND EARLIER (DEC 23) AGREEMENT IN DEFINING NATURE OF "AUTONOMY", HENCE SUBSEQUENT IMPASSES ARE LIKELY. BUT, ASSUMING MNLF IS ON BOARD FOR THE TIME BEING, PRESIDENT MAY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BUYING TIME BY FORESTALLING RESUMPTION OF CONFLICT UNTIL AFTER NEXT MEETING OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (WHICH WE NOW UNDERSTAND WILL BE IN BENGHAZI, NOT TRIPOLI) IN MAY OR JUNE. EMBASSY WILL COMMENT FURTHER WHEN INITIAL REACTION AVAILABLE.
SULLIVAN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
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